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ABSTRACT

This report draws on a recent survey--the 1997 National Survey of America's Families (NSAF)--to examine child care arrangements and expenses for working families with children under age 13 in the state of California. Key components of the project include a household survey, studies of policies in 13 states, and a database with information on all states and the District of Columbia. This report provides data on the types of child care arrangements families use, the number of arrangements they use, the hours children spend in child care, and the amount families spend on child care. The report begins by describing key facts related to child care in California and defining relevant terms. Findings regarding the types and number of child care arrangements and the hours spent in care are examined for children under 5 years of age. Findings on the numbers of school-age children in supervised arrangements, self-care, and parent/other care follow. Child care expenses are examined for all families overall and for two particular groups of families: those with older versus younger children, and families with different earnings levels. Costs in California are then compared to those nationwide. Findings of this report reveal that slightly fewer than half of mothers with children under age 5 and 60 percent of mothers with school-age children are employed. More than 60 percent of children under age 5 of employed mothers are in a nonparental care

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arrangement, with fewer than 33 percent in full-time nonparental care. Almost one-fourth of 6- to 9- year-olds with employed mothers are in before- and after- school programs, compared to fewer than one-tenth of 10- to 12-year-olds. The use of self-care increases as school-age children get older. Low income families spend more than twice as much on child care as a percentage of their earnings as do higher-income families. (KB)

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State Child Care Profile for Children with Employed Mothers: California

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State Profiles

Assessing the New Federalism
An Urban Institute Program to Assess Changing Social Policies

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Assessing the New Federalism

Assessing the New Federalism is a multiyear Urban Institute project designed to analyze the devolution of responsibility for social programs from the federal government to the states. It focuses primarily on health care, income security, employment and training programs, and social services. Researchers monitor program changes and fiscal developments. Alan Weil is the project director. In collaboration with Child Trends, the project studies changes in family well-being. The project provides timely, nonpartisan information to inform public debate and to help state and local decisionmakers carry out their new responsibilities more effectively.

Key components of the project include a household survey, studies of policies in 13 states, and a database with information on all states and the District of Columbia. Publications and database are available free of charge on the Urban Institute's Web site: http://www.urban.org. This paper is one in a series of discussion papers analyzing information from these and other sources.

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STATE CHILD CARE PROFILE FOR CHILDREN WITH EMPLOYED MOTHERS[1]: CALIFORNIA

Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families[2]

Child care is a critical issue for families, particularly for families with working parents. The large number of mothers in the workforce has made America's families more dependent on nonparental care and raised public awareness of early care and education as a subject of policy concern. In California, 56 percent of mothers with children younger than 13 were employed in 1997 (table 1). These parents must decide who will care for their children while they work.

This report[3] provides data on

- The types of child care arrangements families use
- The number of child care arrangements families use
- The hours children spend in child care
- The amount families spend on child care

These data reflect the choices families make, but not the extent to which these choices reflect parental preferences (e.g., whether families are using the care options they want) or parental constraints (e.g., whether they cannot find or afford options they prefer). Data tables 2-7 are at the end of the profile.

TABLE 1. Percentage of Employed Mothers in California and the United States, by Age of Child

	Percentage of Mothers Who Are Employed, by Age of Child	
	CA	US
	%	%
Age of Child[4]		
Under 5	49	57
Between 6 and 12	60	66
Under 13	56	63

Source: Data from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

California Key Facts

Child care in California for children younger than 5 with employed mothers

- Slightly fewer than one-half of mothers with children under 5 are employed.
- More than three out of five children under 5 with employed mothers are in a form of nonparental child care arrangement such as center-based care, family child care, or relative care.
- Fewer than one-third of children under 5 with employed mothers are in full-time (35 hours or more per week) nonparental care.
- More than one-third of children under 5 who have an employed mother and who are in nonparental care are in more than one nonparental child care arrangement each week.

Child care in California for school-age children with employed mothers

- Three out of five mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 12 are employed.
- As children get older, the percentage who are in a supervised arrangement as their primary arrangement decreases. For example, almost one-fourth of 6- to 9-year-olds whose mothers are employed are in before- and after-school programs, compared with fewer than one-tenth of 10- to 12-year-olds.
- The use of self-care (children are alone or with a sibling under 13) increases as children get older. Fewer than one-tenth of 6- to 9-year-olds spend *any* time in self-care on a regular basis, compared with almost one-third of 10- to 12-year-olds.

Child care expenses in California for working families with at least one child under 13

- Almost one-half of working families with children under 13 pay out-of-pocket for child care.
- Working families who pay for care spend approximately 1 out of every 10 dollars they earn on child care.
- Of families who pay for care, those with earnings at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level, or "low-earning families," spend slightly less than 1 out of every 5 dollars they earn on child care. These families spend more than twice as much on child care as a percentage of their earnings than do "higher-earning families."

Definition of Terms

Types of Care:

Primary child care arrangement – the arrangement in which the child spends the greatest number of hours each week while the mother is at work.

The following are types of nonparental child care:

- *Center-based child care (only for age 4 and under)* – care in child care centers, Head Start, preschool, prekindergarten, and before- or after-school programs.
- *Before- and after-school programs (only for age 6 and older)* – programs designed to care for children before school starts or after school is over. These programs can also be located within schools, community centers, and youth development agencies. The survey did not specifically ask about sports, lessons, or other recreational activities that may sometimes be used as child care arrangements by parents.
- *Family child care* – care by a nonrelative in the provider's home.
- *Babysitter or nanny* – care by a nonrelative in the child's home.
- *Relative care* – care by a relative in either the child's or the provider's home.

In addition, the following are other types of child care:

- *Parent care (called parent care/other care for age 6 and older)* – care given to those children whose mother did not report a nonparental child care arrangement while she worked. This type of care could be provided by the other parent, the mother while she works, or a self-employed mother at home. For school-age children, this may also include enrichment activities such as lessons or sports. Because of the way data were collected in the National Survey of America's Families, these activities are not defined as child care in this profile.
- *Self-care* – regular amounts of time each week in which the child is not being supervised while the mother works. This includes time spent alone or with a sibling younger than 13.
- *Any hours in self-care* – children regularly spending some time in unsupervised settings each week, regardless of whether it is the primary arrangement (i.e., used for the greatest number of hours or while the mother is at work).

Income Groups:

- *Higher-income families* – families with incomes above 200 percent of the federal poverty level.
- *Low-income families* – families with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level (e.g., $25,258 for a family of two adults and one child in the United States in 1997).

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CHILDREN UNDER 5[5]

Slightly fewer than one-half of California mothers with children under 5 are employed (table 1). Consequently, many children in California spend at least some time in child care during the critical developmental years before they start school.

Type of Child Care Arrangements[6]

- Two out of three children under 5 in California are in primary child care arrangements with someone other than a parent while their mothers are working (table 2).

- Slightly more than one-third of California's children under 5 are in group settings (19 percent in center-based care and 16 percent in family child care). In addition, approximately one-quarter of the state's children under 5 are in relative care and relatively few are in the care of a babysitter or nanny. More than one-third are in parent care (figure 1).

    - California's children under 5 are less likely to be in center-based care than their counterparts nationwide (19 percent compared with 32 percent) and are less likely to be in this form of care across all of the age and income groups analyzed here (figure 2).

    - California's children under 5 are more likely to be in parent care than similar children in the United States as a whole (34 percent compared with 24 percent).

By age:

- Among California's infants and toddlers, fewer than one-tenth are in center-based care and approximately one-seventh are in family child care. In addition, more than one-quarter are in relative care and fewer than one-tenth are in the care of a babysitter or nanny. More than two-fifths of the state's infants and toddlers are in parent care.

    - California infants and toddlers are less likely to be in center-based care than their counterparts nationwide (9 percent compared with 22 percent) and more likely to be in parent care (42 percent compared with 27 percent). Infants and toddlers in California do not differ significantly from similar children nationwide in the use of other arrangements.

- Almost one-third of California's 3- and 4-year-olds are in center-based care and almost one-fifth are in family child care. In addition, fewer than one-quarter are in relative care, relatively few are in the care of a babysitter or nanny, and one-quarter are in parent care.

    - California's 3- and 4-year-olds are less likely to be in center-based care than their counterparts nationwide (31 percent compared with 45 percent), but they do not differ significantly from similar children nationwide in the use of other arrangements.

- and 4-year-olds (42 percent compared with 25 percent) and less likely to be in center-based care (9 percent compared with 31 percent).

  - The differences between these two age groups reflect national patterns. However, California differs from the United States as a whole in that, nationally, infants and toddlers are also significantly more likely to be in relative care than 3- and 4-year-olds.

By income:

- Approximately one-sixth of California's low-income children under 5 are in center-based care and another one-sixth are in family child care. In addition, more than one-quarter are in relative care, relatively few are in the care of a babysitter or nanny, and more than one-third are in parent care.

  - Low-income children under 5 in California are less likely to be in center-based care than similar children nationwide (17 percent compared with 26 percent), but they do not differ significantly from their counterparts nationwide in the use of other arrangements.

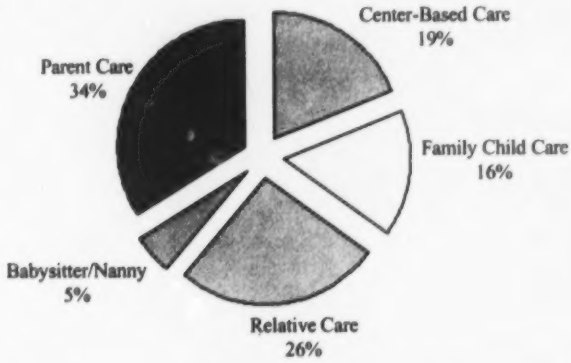
- One-fifth of California's higher-income children under 5 are in center-based care and approximately one-sixth are in family child care. The remaining children are in relative care (24 percent), the care of a babysitter or nanny (6 percent), or parent care (34 percent).

  - Higher-income children under 5 in California are less likely to be in center-based care than similar children nationwide (20 percent compared with 35 percent) and more likely to be in parent care (34 percent compared with 21 percent). These California children, however, are similar to their counterparts in the United States as a whole in the use of other arrangements.

- No significant difference exists in the child care arrangement patterns of low- and higher-income children under 5 in California.

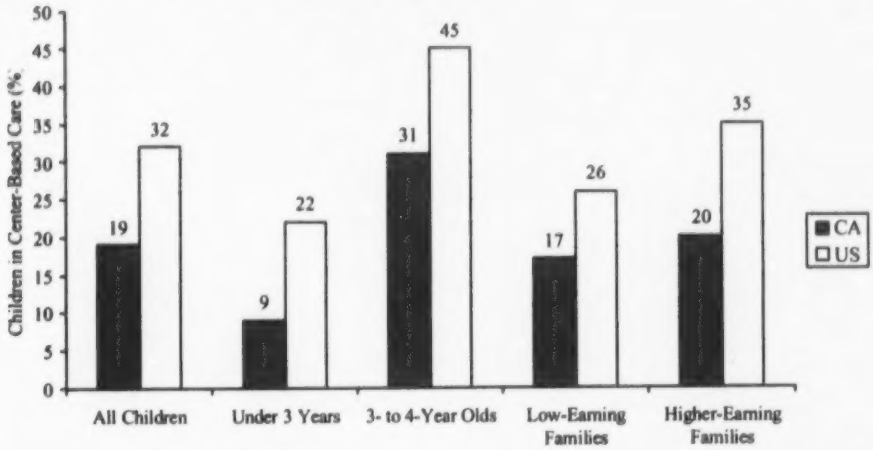
  - California differs from the national pattern in that, nationally, low-income children under 5 are significantly less likely to be in center-based care and more likely to be in relative care and parent care than higher-income children under 5.

FIGURE 1. Primary Child Care Arrangements for Children under 5 with Employed Mothers in California, 1997



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

FIGURE 2. Children under 5 in Center-Based Care with Employed Mothers in California and the United States, by Selected Characteristics, 1997



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.

Hours Spent in Care[7]

- In California, more than one out of four children under 5 are in full-time care (35 or more hours per week) (table 3).

- The percentage of California's children under 5 in full-time care increases to almost two-fifths when only mothers who are employed full time are considered.

- The use of full-time care for children under 5 is significantly lower in California than in the United States as a whole. Nationally, 41 percent of children under 5 are in full-time care and 52 percent are in full-time care when only mothers working full time are considered (figure 3).

By age:

- The use of full-time care by California's infants and toddlers does not differ significantly from that by 3- and 4-year-olds (26 percent and 33 percent, respectively), a pattern seen nationally as well.

    - California's infants and toddlers are less likely to be in full-time care than their counterparts nationwide (26 percent compared with 39 percent).

    - California's 3- and 4-year-olds are less likely to be in full-time care than similar children nationwide (33 percent compared with 44 percent).

By income:

- California's low- and higher-income children under 5 are equally likely to be in full-time care (32 percent and 27 percent, respectively), which is consistent with national patterns.

    - The use of full-time care by California's low-income children under 5 does not differ significantly from that of their counterparts in the United States as a whole (32 percent compared with 40 percent).

    - Higher-income children under 5 in California are less likely to be in full-time care than similar children in the United States as a whole (27 percent compared with 42 percent).

FIGURE 3. Children under 5 in Full-Time Care with Employed Mothers in California and the United States, 1997

Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Note: Full-time care is 35 or more hours per week.

Number of Arrangements[8]

- More than one-third of California's children under 5 in nonparental care are in multiple nonparental child care arrangements (29 percent are in two arrangements and 6 percent are in three or more arrangements) (table 4; figure 4).

    - The number of arrangements used each week by children under 5 in California is consistent with the number of arrangements used by their counterparts nationwide.

By age:

- Among California's infants and toddlers in nonparental care, two-thirds are in one nonparental arrangement each week, more than one-quarter are in two arrangements, and fewer than one-tenth are in three or more arrangements.

    - The number of arrangements used by infants and toddlers in California is consistent with that of similar children nationwide.

- Slightly fewer than two-thirds of California's 3- and 4-year-olds are in one arrangement each week, more than one-quarter are in two arrangements, and fewer than one-tenth are in three or more arrangements.

    - California's 3- and 4-year-olds are less likely to be in three or more arrangements than similar children nationwide (7 percent compared with 13 percent).

- No difference exists in the number of arrangements used by California's infants and toddlers and 3- and 4-year-olds.

    - California differs from the United States as a whole in that, nationally, infants and toddlers are less likely to be in three or more arrangements than 3- and 4-year-olds.

By Income:

- In California, almost two-thirds of low-income children under 5 in nonparental care are in one arrangement each week, slightly fewer than one-third are in two arrangements, and fewer than one-tenth are in three or more arrangements.

    - The number of arrangements used by California's low-income children under 5 is consistent with that of similar children nationwide.

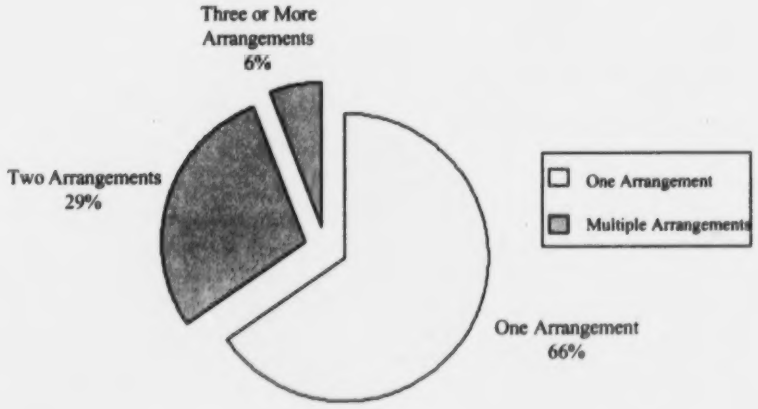
- Among California's higher-income children under 5 in nonparental care, more than two-thirds are in one arrangement each week, more than one-quarter are in two arrangements, and fewer than one-tenth are in three or more arrangements.

    - The number of arrangements used by higher-income children under 5 in California is consistent with that of similar children nationwide.

- No difference exists in the number of arrangements used by California's low- and higher-income children under 5.

  - The similarity between low- and higher-income children under 5 in California is also seen nationally.

FIGURE 4. Number of Nonparental Arrangements for Children under 5 with Employed Mothers in California, 1997*



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Note: Percentages do not add to 100 as a result of rounding.
*Children in nonparental care only.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN[9]

Many children continue to need child care once they start school. Three-fifths of California's mothers with children between the ages of 6 and 12 are employed (table 1). For those parents who cannot arrange work schedules around school, child care plays an important role in filling the gap between school and when a parent returns home from work. High quality before- and after-school programs can also provide school-age children with activities that will potentially enhance academic and social development (Posner and Vandell 1999). However, under some circumstances, unsupervised care can put children at risk of harm and poor physical, social, and intellectual development (Kerrebrock and Lewit 1999; Peterson 1989).

Supervised Arrangements

- In California, three-fifths of 6- to 9-year-olds are in one of the supervised primary care arrangements analyzed here while their mothers are working (table 5).
    - ➢ The child care arrangement patterns for California's 6- to 9-year-olds in supervised care are consistent with the patterns for their counterparts in the United States as a whole.
- More than one-third of 10- to 12-year-olds in California are in one of the supervised primary arrangements analyzed here while their mothers are working.
    - ➢ The child care arrangement patterns for California's 10- to 12-year-olds in supervised care are consistent with the patterns for their counterparts nationwide.
- California's children are less likely to be in supervised care as they get older (figure 5).
    - ➢ Fewer than one-tenth of 10- to 12-year-olds are in before- and after-school programs compared with almost one-quarter of 6- to 9-year-olds.

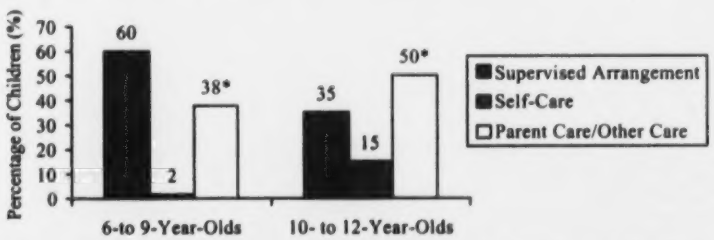
Self-Care

- Two percent of California's 6- to 9-year-olds are reported to be in self-care as their primary child care arrangement while their mothers are working.
    - The use of self-care increases to 6 percent in California if 6- to 9-year-olds who spend *any* hours in self-care are included.
    - The percentage of California's 6- to 9-year-olds primarily in self-care while their mothers are at work (2 percent) and the percentage spending *any* hours in self-care (6 percent) are lower than the national averages for this age group (5 percent and 10 percent, respectively).
- Approximately one in seven of California's 10- to 12-year-olds are reported to be in self-care as their primary child care arrangement while their mothers are working.
    - The use of self-care increases to almost one in three if California's 10- to 12-year-olds who spend *any* hours in self-care each week are included.
    - The percentage of California's 10- to 12-year-olds primarily in self-care while their mothers work is lower than the national average for this age group (15 percent compared with 24 percent). The percentage of California's 10- to 12-year-olds spending *any* hours in self-care is consistent with the national average (32 percent compared with 35 percent).
- In California, and in the United States as a whole, the use of self-care increases as children get older.

Parent Care/Other Care

- In California, almost two-fifths of 6- to 9-year-olds and one-half of 10- to 12-year-olds are reported to be in parent care/other care. Although 6- to 9-year-olds seem less likely to be in parent care/other care than 10- to 12-year-olds, the difference between these groups is not significant.

FIGURE 5. Primary Child Care Arrangements for 6- to 9-Year-Olds and 10- to 12-Year-Olds with Employed Mothers in California, 1997



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
Note: Parent Care/Other Care category includes the proportion of children whose mother did not report using any of the supervised or unsupervised forms of care analyzed here while she worked. For children in this category, parents are arranging their work schedules around the school day to care for their children or using enrichment activities such as lessons or sports.
*Differences are not statistically significant.

CHILD CARE EXPENSES[10]

Child care expenses can consume a large portion of a working family's budget, although not all families pay for child care. Some do not use child care, while others look for free child care alternatives. For those that do pay for care, child care expenses can be significant. These data show out-of-pocket expenses for all children under 13 in a family regardless of the type or amount of care the family purchases (box).

Child Care Expenses for All Working Families

- Almost half of California's working families with children under 13 pay for child care. Among these working families paying for care, the average monthly child care expense is $343, or 1 out of every 10 dollars they earn (table 6).

  - The percentage of California working families paying for child care and the average monthly child care expenses for those families paying for care are consistent with national averages.

  - California's working families tend to spend a greater portion of their earnings on child care than similar families in the United States as a whole (10.8 percent compared with 9.2 percent).

The data presented here

- focus on working families that have at least one child under 13.
- are based on the net out-of-pocket expenses of the National Survey of America's Families respondents and not necessarily the full cost of their children's care. These expenses underestimate the full cost of care if the cost is subsidized by the government or by an employer, or if a portion of the cost is paid by a nonresident parent or by a relative or friend. In addition, these data are based on the combined experiences of many different types of families. All families (for example, families using one hour of care per week and those using 40 hours of care per week; families with one child and those with several children; and families receiving help paying for child care and those that are not) are included in the average child care expenses for California's working families.
- focus on the earnings of families instead of income. Earnings include only wages, not other sources of income, such as child support, earned income tax credits, and interest from bank accounts.

By Age

- More than half of California's working families with at least one child under 5 pay for care. Among those families paying for care, families with at least one child under 5 spend an average of $333 per month on child care, or more than 1 out of 10 dollars of their earnings.

  - California's families with at least one child under 5 are less likely to pay for care than their counterparts nationwide (53 percent compared with 60 percent).

  - No significant difference exists between families with at least one child under 5 in California and the United States as a whole in average monthly child care expenses and average percentage of earnings spent on child care.

- Fewer than one-half of California's families with only school-age children pay for care. Of those that pay for care, families with only school-age children spend on average $355 per month on child care, or approximately 10.3 percent of their earnings.

  - California's families with only school-age children are more likely to pay for care than their counterparts nationwide (44 percent compared with 37 percent).

  - Among those families that pay for care, California's families with only school-age children pay more in average monthly child care expenses than similar families nationwide ($355 compared with $224) and spend a higher percentage of their earnings on child care (10.3 percent compared with 7.5 percent).

- California's families with at least one child under 5 are more likely to pay for child care than families with only school-age children (53 percent compared with 44 percent). No significant difference exists, however, between these two groups in California in terms of the average monthly child care expenses and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care for those families paying for care.

  - The differences between these two California groups in terms of the likelihood of paying for care follow national patterns.

  - California differs from the United States as whole in that, nationally, families with at least one child under 5 have significantly higher average monthly child care expenses and spend on average a higher percentage of their earnings on child care when they pay for care than working families with only school-age children.

By Family Earnings

- Approximately two-fifths of California's families with earnings at or below 200 percent of the -earning families," pay for care. Among those families paying for care, low-earning families spend on average $236 per month on child care, or approximately 1 out of every 5 dollars they earn.

  - The proportion spent on child care is even higher for some low-earning families; more than one-third of California's low-earning families spend more than 20 percent of their earnings on child care (table 7).

  - No significant difference exists between low-earning families in California and the United States as a whole in terms of the likelihood of paying for care, average monthly child care expenses, and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care.

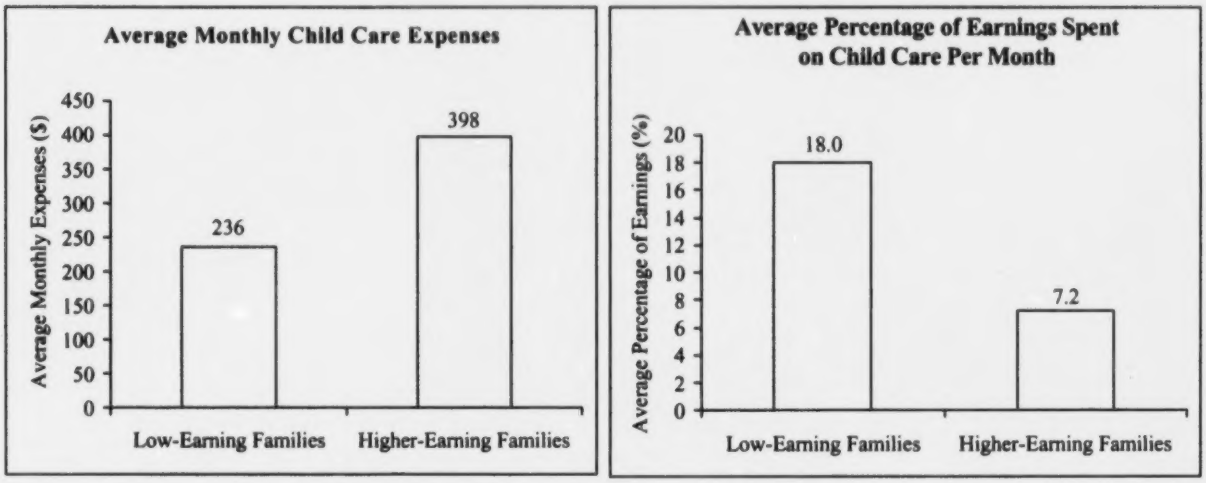
- More than half of California's higher-earning families pay for care. These families average $398 a month in child care expenses, or 7.2 percent of their earnings, when they do pay for care.

  - No significant difference exists between higher-earning families in California and the United States as a whole in terms of the likelihood of paying for care, average monthly child care expenses, and the average percentage of earnings spent on child care.

- California's low-earning families are less likely to pay for child care than higher-earning families (41 percent compared with 54 percent) and they generally pay less in child care expenses when they do pay for care ($236 compared with $398 per month). On the other hand, as a percentage of their earnings low-earning families spend more than twice as much for that care than do higher-earning families (18.0 percent compared with 7.2 percent) (figure 6).

  - The differences between low- and higher-earning families in California in terms of the percentage of families paying for care, average monthly child care expenses, and the percentage of earnings spent on child care are seen nationally as well.

FIGURE 6. Average Monthly Expenses and Average Percentage of Earnings Spent on Child Care by Low- and Higher-Earning Families with Children under 13 in California, 1997*



Source: Urban Institute calculations from the 1997 National Survey of America's Families.
*Of those families paying for care.

Notes

1. For randomly selected children in the sample households, interviews were conducted with the person most knowledgeable about each child. Because the mother was the "most knowledgeable adult" for a majority of the children in the national sample, the term "mother" is used here to refer to this respondent. From these interviews, data were collected about the types of care used, the number of hours the child spent in each form of care, and the child care expenses for the family. For more on the National Survey of America's Families (NSAF) survey methods, including the "most knowledgeable adult," see Dean Brick et al. 1999.
2. The NSAF is a national survey of more than 44,000 households and is representative of the noninstitutionalized, civilian population under age 65 in the nation as a whole and in 13 focal states (Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin). The survey focuses primarily on health care, income support, job training, and social services, including child care. Data from the 1997 NSAF are used here to examine child care characteristics for preschool and school-age children. The NSAF collected child care information on a nationally representative sample of children above and below the federal poverty level, as well as on a representative sample of children in 12 states (Colorado is not included in these analyses because of the small size of the nonsummer sample for this state. Because of the late addition of Colorado to the *Assessing the New Federalism* project, responses to the child care questions from a large number of Colorado respondents were received during the summer months and did not provide information on nonsummer child care arrangements, which are the focus of this analysis.)
3. This profile focuses only on data that are statistically different from data on other subgroups within the state or those that are statistically different from the United States. Data not presented in the text may or may not be statistically significant. One should be cautious in interpreting the actual point estimates because of the sizes of the samples. For the data on types of child care arrangements and hours in care for children under 5, confidence intervals around the national point estimates averaged +/-3 percentage points, and the confidence intervals around subpopulation point estimates within states were larger (+/- 7 percentage points for the state estimates of age and income subpopulations). For the data on number of child care arrangements, confidence intervals around the national point estimates averaged +/-3 percentage points, and the confidence intervals around subpopulation point estimates within states were larger (+/- 6 percentage points for the state estimates of age and income subpopulations). For confidence interval information for school-age and child care expense data, see Capizzano, Tout, and Adams 2000 and Giannarelli and Barsimantov 2000.
4. Sample sizes for children under 5: 633 (CA), 9,571 (US); sample sizes for children between 6 and 12: 721 (CA), 11,947 (US); sample sizes for children under 13: 1,169 (CA), 18,905 (US).
5. This analysis focuses only on children under 5 whose mothers are employed and were interviewed during the nonsummer months. In addition, the NSAF asks respondents only about regular child care arrangements. Respondents using a complicated array of arrangements that would not qualify as "regular" would not be identified in this study as using a child care arrangement. For more information on types of child care arrangements, number of hours in care, and number of nonparental arrangements for all of the 12 states and the United States, see Capizzano and Adams 2000a, Capizzano and Adams 2000b, and Capizzano, Adams, and Sonenstein 2000.
6. The focus is on the type of primary arrangement in which children under 5 with employed mothers are placed.
7. For this analysis, the hours that each child spent in care across all reported nonparental arrangements were totaled and the child was then placed in one of four categories: "full-time care" (35 or more hours per week), "part-time care" (15 to 34 hours per week), "minimal care" (1 to 14 hours per week), and "no hours in child care" (no regular hours in a nonparental arrangement). This analysis focuses on nonparental arrangements. Although data for hours in care are broken down by full-time care, part-time care, minimal care, and no hours of care, this discussion will focus only on full-time care. Table 3 provides data on the remaining categories.
8. To capture child care arrangements, mothers were asked if the child attended any of three separate categories of center-based care: 1) Head Start; 2) a group or day care center, nursery preschool, or prekindergarten program; or 3) a before- or after-school program. Mothers were also asked about babysitting in the home by someone other than a parent and questioned about "child care or babysitting in someone else's home." A child can be cared for by two different providers within the same category. In these cases, the NSAF captures only one of the arrangements and therefore undercounts the number of arrangements used by that parent. Based on comparisons with other national data sources, however, these undercounts are small.
9. Because school is the arrangement in which children spend the most hours each week, the focus is on child care patterns during the child's out-of-school time. This profile focuses on the category of primary care in which children between the ages of 6 and 12 with employed mothers are placed and the percentage of children in any

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regular self-care. The child care arrangement patterns of 5-year-olds are not discussed in this profile because of the complexity of the arrangements for this age group. Age 5 is a transitional age when some children are in school and others are not. The child care patterns for families with a child in this age group, therefore, can vary substantially depending on whether or not the child is in school. For more information about school-age child care and the methods used to calculate this information, see Capizzano, Tout, and Adams 2000.

10. For more information about child care expenses in the 12 focal states or the nation as a whole, see Giannarelli and Barsimantov 2000.

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